

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 7-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3 are amended, claims 7-12 are added, and claims 4-6 are cancelled. Reconsideration of the present application based on the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Satisfy All Formal Requirements

Claims 3-6 have been objected to because of informalities. Claim 3 has been amended to obviate the informality. Furthermore, claims 4-6 have been cancelled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection of claims 3-6 is respectfully requested.

II. Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,740,698 to Jerominek. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Jerominek fails to disclose a connector assembly for a flat wire member including conductors and an end portion split into a plurality of split pieces, comprising: a first connector including terminals; a plurality of second connectors for holding split pieces of the flat wire member in a state that portions of the conductors are exposed; wherein the first connector includes a plurality of coupling portions to be coupled with the plurality of second connectors, and the terminals are so accommodated in the first connector as to be brought into contact with the exposed portions of conductors of the flat wire member when the second connectors are respectively coupled with the coupling portions, as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claim 10.

Instead, Jerominek discloses a ribbon cable connector system including a female connector 102 and male connectors 101 to be coupled with the female connector from both sides thereof. Flat conductive fingers 3 are embedded in a flat non-conductive medium or

wafer 4 which is seen as separated at its end by a slit (Fig. 2). The wafer 4 is sandwiched by housings 2 and the fingers 3 are brought into contact with fingers 14.

Referring to the Office Action's assertion that Jerominek's female connector 102 has a plurality of connecting portions, Applicant respectfully disagrees. Instead, the connecting portions of Jerominek are respectively connected with different flat wire members, and not with a plurality of second connectors respectively holding split pieces of a flat wire member.

In addition, conductors of Jerominek's flat wire member 1 are connected with the fingers 3 which in turn are connected with the fingers 14 and 15 of the female connector 102.

In contrast, according to the present invention, the terminals of the first connector are brought into contact with the exposed portion of the conductors of the flat wire member.

Thus, the applied art fails to disclose all of the features of the present invention. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 10 are distinguishable over the applied art. Furthermore, claims 2-3 and 7-9 which depend from claim 1, and claims 11 and 12 which depend from claim 10, are likewise distinguishable over the applied art for at least the reasons discussed above as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Jude L. Cooney
Registration No. 54,045

JAO:JLC/dap

Date: December 1, 2003

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
